

## **MINUTES**

**Bar Harbor Cruise Ship Task Force  
Thursday May 8, 2008  
8:30 AM  
Council Chambers  
Municipal Building  
93 Cottage Street**

### **I. Call to Order at 8:33 AM**

*Members present: Paul Paradis, Chair; Chris Fogg, Vice-Chair; Anne Krieg, Secretary; Nathan Young; Fred Cook; Mary Opdyke; George Seavey; Charlie Phippen; Amy Powers*

### **II. Excused Absences**

*Greg Gordon was excused by a motion duly made by Opdyke and seconded by Powers.*

*III. Minutes were approved by a motion duly made by Opdyke and seconded by Young.*

*IV. The agenda was adopted by a motion duly made by Young and seconded by Krieg.*

### **V. Staff Reports**

Paradis reported on what happened at the Council meeting on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008. He provided them with an update on map for drop-off options, and an updated spreadsheet for fees analyses.

### **VI. Regular Business**

**A. Continue discussion with Ocean Properties on future plans for West Street and service to Cruise Ship tenders and passengers.**

There was no update for this agenda item.

#### **B. Cruise Ship Fees**

**i. Report from Paul Paradis on discussion with Town Manager and/or Finance director on their financial goals regarding Cruise Ship Fees.**

There were no conclusions from this meeting.

**ii. Action plan on how to move forward in determining appropriate fees.**

The group discussed the idea to create a sub-committee to work on fees and then present to the full Task Force. It was noted that this may be a more efficient method.

*Young moved that Paradis, Krieg, Phippen and Powers would make up a sub-committee to prepare a fee proposal; motion was seconded by George Seavey.*

The group discussed the membership of the sub-committee.

*Young amended the motion to add Chris Fogg and Seavey agreed to amend the motion.*

Powers added that she can provide information and feedback, but it should be a stakeholder decision.

*Young amended to remove Powers and Seavey agreed. He also removed Phippen because of the pending season for his other duties.*

*Young clarified his motion that the sub-committee would be made up of Krieg, Paradis and Fogg. Seavey agreed with the final motion. All in favor.*

The timeline for the work is to bring questions and discussion points to the June Cruise Ship conference in Portland, and then finalize by July with the Task Force.

Bob Bahr asked if the fees will be a multiple year plan for fees, that is, a percentage increase. It was noted that a percentage increase would be anticipated.

**C. Downtown drop-off point**

**i. Report from Paul Paradis on any council input on a downtown drop-off**

There was none provided.

**ii. Discussion and possible action on how to proceed with a downtown drop-off on cruise ship days.**

Young expressed concern with safety of the options. He opined we should make better use of the top of Newport Drive.

Powers discussed if another drop off could be created for fall when the traffic numbers are lower. She also asked if the Village Green could be further modified.

Phippen asked about the designated loading zone on Main Street right before turning onto Newport Drive.

Seavey said if the buses come into town from Route 233 and onto to Cromwell Harbor Road, then left on Main Street and unload around Bark Harbor (edit: The Man Store). He also said if buses use the Sieur du Monts exit to come into the village, they could also drop off there. It was noted that the majority of the buses come from Route 233 and Eden Street. Paradis offered the idea of testing some routes/stops with the bus companies.

Krieg questioned if the different seasons could have different spots. Traffic on Main Street is reduced in the fall in comparison to the peak summer months.

Young noted that the sidewalks are filled on a cruise ship day and questioned the need for an additional stop and felt there will be chaos of another stop on the traffic.

Opdyke said many passengers walk into the downtown area. Fogg said the cruise ship survey had complaints about walking up the hill. Both Young and Phippen agreed that Newport Drive is the preferred option for this situation.

***Young moved to designated drop off spaces across the Village Motel and the top of Newport Drive to use at the discretion of the bus companies for the 2008 season. Cook seconded.***

There was discussion on the possible impacts to residential areas.

After discussion, Powers called Greg Gordon and placed her phone on speaker to allow dialogue with Gordon.

Kayak tours indicated they are on a tight schedule and cannot easily adjust for another drop off.

Young said his motion offers the operational discretion to use another spot to drop off and not meant as a requirement. It affords the opportunity to allow people to not have to climb the hill to go into the business area.

Gordon said that about 10% of the buses would use the Villager option with their current route coming from Suer du Mont exit. The buses likely wouldn't use it for other routes into town. He expressed concern about using residential streets and the difficulty of using a different route to get to the Villager drop off area.

The Merchant's Association and the Chamber have told Councilors that this second drop off area would be advantageous for their businesses. The space in front of the Library was also discussed. A testing of this route was considered.

Discussion also ensued about the impacts to the congested part of Main Street.

***Motion was withdrawn by Young and Cook.***

Gordon offered to test the spaces on a smaller one ship day to see how it would work and allow for monitoring.

Island Explorer was discussed as an option to get visitors to other parts of the downtown business district. It would help to have their participation in the system.

More passengers are finding out that the bus is available. A downtown shuttle remains a desire for the town and is listed as a priority project in their Goals.

Gordon indicated he would be concerned with tying up traffic in the test areas but again wanted to try it on a one ship day to see how it works.

Powers noted we need to disseminate this information to the tour companies. Seavey reminded the group that we can tell the buses where their routes can be as we do now.

Gordon noted that many people would get off the bus at an optional spot so 5 minutes minimum is necessary to plan for the stop duration. Possible tying up of traffic continued to be discussed for Main Street.

***Young moved that top of Newport Drive be a downtown drop off area. Bahr seconded.***

Fogg was concerned that we have not exhausted our options yet.

Powers discussed Island Explorer needs to be approached as an option as a community partner.

Krieg added that more locations can be looked at in the future and still believes that options for the fall season should still be explored.

Gordon noted that the Explorer stops its service in mid-October.

***Motion passed by a vote of 5 to 4 (Cook, Fogg, Seavey and Powers opposed).***

***Phippen moved for the Task Force to test and research more options for downtown drop-off areas. Fogg seconded.***

In discussion, Young noted the group should watch what passengers do when they disembark. Moving forward a downtown shuttle should be part of our efforts.

***All were in favor of the motion.***

***Fogg moved to recommend that the Town approach the Island Explorer to discuss feasibility for a downtown shuttle to include the Town Pier and other downtown stops. Powers seconded.***

Both Krieg and Cook noted that any expanded Island Explorer operation would have to carefully coordinate with the cruise ship tour bus operations. Young agreed noting that there must be permanent dedicated stops.

Opdyke offered that the fee structure could include adding more Explorer buses on Cruise Ship days.

Krieg questioned how the cruise industry will react to the Town offering free buses that may compete with their tours. Gordon and Powers both responded that there might be a concern with this provision. Bahr added that the cruise ship industry does not offer a shopping tour in-town.

Phippen added that work should continue to provide a transportation hub out of town to accommodate transfer to a shuttle.

***All were in favor of the motion.***

**D. Update on walking map**

Krieg reviewed a walking map she had prepared with Healthy Acadia and with Scenic Byway funds.

Phippen offered that a map could have different types of routes, that is a historic route and a business route.

Permanent signs with maps were also discussed as an option.

Bahr noted the importance of showing the level of strain for each route.

Krieg offered that the next meeting should establish goals for the map and establish a sub-committee.

**E. Discussion and possible action on timing and frequency of meetings for the summer months.**

The Task Force approved the following schedule by a motion duly made by Young and seconded by Phippen:

May 22<sup>nd</sup>

June 12<sup>th</sup>

July 10<sup>th</sup>

August 11<sup>th</sup>

September 11<sup>th</sup> (8 AM site visit at Harborview Park)

**VII. Public Comment**

There was none.

**VIII. Items for next agenda**

Fees and walking map would continue to be discussed.

**IX. Set next meeting time, date and place – May 22<sup>nd</sup> at 8:30 AM in the Council Chambers**

**X. Adjournment at 10:47 AM.**

*Minutes prepared on May 20, 2008 by Anne Krieg, Planning Director and Secretary to the Task Force.*